

6 Refectory

The refectory is a place of refreshment, hospitality and welcome. Does our stewardship practice:

- model the generosity we teach by our commitment to parish share and mission giving?
- invest in hospitality, celebrate generosity and offer a warm welcome to worship and activities?
- help people to understand and join our planned giving scheme as appropriate for them?
- help our children to live well and generously around money?

7 Scriptorium

The scriptorium is the place of learning, of study, creativity and reflection. Does stewardship practice in our church:

- commit to a regular stewardship programme to teach and challenge at least every three years?
- encourage our congregation, especially in small groups, to learn a biblical understanding of wealth, possessions and generous giving?
- offer or signpost to courses and resources which encourage household budgets and build financial capability?



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The monastery was a place of worship, prayer and service. Feeding the hungry, caring for the sick and offering hospitality to strangers were signs of God's loving presence in his world.

The monastery was also a place of sending out, a centre of mission as well as ministry. Those whose needs were met were sent out to live the life of God in their daily lives and in their communities, aware of God's love for them. Through their books and sometimes their travels monks would teach and share the good news of Jesus in the world.

Our church is sacred place for prayer and worship; a centre of ministry and mission. Thinking about the seven sacred spaces and stewardship will help sustain and release the ministry and mission of our church. It will bless our congregations, our wider community and further afield. It will help us mature in our discipleship and bring praise and honour to God.

'for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God.' (2 Corinthians 9:12)

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7 Sacred spaces and Stewardship



Church growth expert George Lings notes that our old monasteries include seven sacred spaces: cell, chapel, chapter, cloister, garden, refectory and scriptorium. These spaces capture what it is to be fully alive as God's people.

Living, working and praying together, the monks developed these *physical spaces* to help them in their *spiritual lives*: a cell for private prayer, a chapel for worship together, a refectory for eating together, a library for writing and so on.

The first letter of Timothy reminds us that a right attitude to wealth helps us 'lay hold of the life that is truly life' (1 Tim 6:19). The seven sacred spaces can help reflect on stewardship in our local church and how we might do it better.



In small groups choose just one or two of the spaces and discuss the questions. Then in the bigger group share each group's thoughts. Finally, try to put the issues you have identified in some kind of priority order for taking action.

1 Cell

The cell is where we are alone before God; a place of prayer and of accountability as stewards.

Do we:

- invite people each year to prayerfully review their giving to our church's ministry?
- thank people every year for their gifts?
- encourage in church members an 'attitude of gratitude' and the practice of generosity?

2 Chapel

The chapel is where we worship together around word and sacrament.

So, in our worship:

- do we regularly preach on managing money well and generously as disciples?
- do we make prayer an essential part of our stewardship practice?
- is our Sunday offering important in our worship; a sacrament of the offering of our whole life to God each week?

3 Chapter

The chapter was where the monks discussed and made decisions. In our church do we:

- have a small group leading on stewardship in the church, annually reviewing our financial dashboard and giving profile?
- prepare and communicate an annual budget to the congregation?
- have policies in place regarding reserves and legacy gifts?

4 Cloister

The cloister is the place for conversations. It connects the other sacred spaces. Do we:

- connect money, ethical decisions and discipleship as a healthy response to a consumer society?
- offer or signpost practical support for those in debt or money anxiety?
- ensure that our money talk and fundraising practice are consistent with our stewardship values?

5 Garden

The monastery garden was a place of work as well as rest. Does our stewardship teaching:

- value work - paid and unpaid - as a vocation, and support those not in work?
- encourage a biblical perspective on creation and the environment?
- actively promote will making and gifts in wills as an act of responsible stewardship?